

CHARLES BLAKE.

MAY 12, 1898.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House and ordered to be printed.

Mr. MINOR, from the Committee on Claims, submitted the following
REPORT.

[To accompany S. 1213.]

The Committee on Claims, to whom was referred the bill (S. 1213) for the relief of Pay Clerk Charles Blake, United States Navy, having had the same under consideration, recommend its passage, adopting as their report that previously submitted on a similar bill by the Senate during the Fifty-first Congress, and herewith appended.

[Senate Report No. 403, Fifty-first Congress, first session.]

The Committee on Naval Affairs, to whom was referred the bill (S. 2776) for the relief of Pay Clerk Charles Blake, U. S. Navy, having had the same under consideration, beg leave to submit the following report:

A bill of this same character and identical in its provisions was considered by this committee during the first session of the Fiftieth Congress, and favorably reported to the Senate and there passed. The committee is still of the same opinion and report the bill without amendment, with the recommendation that it do pass, and append hereto and make part of this report the former report, which comes down from the Forty-ninth Congress.

[Senate Report No. 1420, Forty-ninth Congress, first session.]

The Committee on Naval Affairs present the following letters as their report on Senate bill No. 2400:

U. S. FLAGSHIP TRENTON (2d rate),
Yokohama, Japan, March 3, 1886.

SIR: I have the honor to inform you that after having, in obedience to orders from the Navy Department, reported to you for duty on the arrival of the *Trenton* from Nagasaki Sunday afternoon, February 7, 1886, I returned for the night to the Windsor House, where my luggage was stored, there being no quarters for me on board until Paymaster Lyon could transfer accounts.

That night, a few minutes after 4 o'clock, the hotel was found to be on fire. The wind was blowing in such a way at the time as to cause the flames to speedily envelop the building, leaving the occupants only opportunity to escape, and giving them little chance to save property.

The hotel building was completely obliterated, and in addition to losing my entire outfit, provided for a three years' cruise, I had the misfortune to lose a quantity of

Government books and blanks, including one book containing fifty sets blank bills of exchange intended for use on this station, besides the pay rolls, final returns, etc., appertaining to my last quarterly accounts of the U. S. R. S. *Vermont*.

The above-mentioned books, blanks, returns, etc., were packed together in one large chest, which I endeavored to drag out of the burning building, but, from its weight, was unable to do so.

Accompanying me in the hotel was Charles Blake, pay clerk, U. S. N., who had reported with me for duty the day before, and who also lost his entire outfit, saving only the one suit in which he escaped from the building.

In view of these facts I deem it my duty to ask that proper steps may be taken to relieve me from responsibility for these serious losses, and also to account for my being out of the ship, after having reported for duty under your command.

I am, sir, respectfully, your obedient servant,

JAMES E. TOLFREE,
Paymaster, U. S. N.

Rear-Admiral JOHN LEE DAVIS, U. S. N.,
Commanding U. S. Naval Force on Asiatic Station.

U. S. FLAGSHIP TRENTON,
Yokohama, Japan, March 8, 1886.

SIR: In obedience to your order of the 5th instant we have the honor to report as follows: Paymaster James E. Tolfree, having been ordered to join the *Trenton* at this place, and arriving several days before the *Trenton*, had taken up his quarters at the Windsor. Upon the arrival of the *Trenton*, on the afternoon of the 7th ultimo, Paymaster Tolfree reported for duty on board, but being unable to occupy his quarters, Paymaster Lyon not having been detached, he returned to the Windsor House. At a little past four on the morning of the 8th ultimo the Windsor House was discovered to be on fire. Paymaster Tolfree, upon awakening, found his room full of smoke, and lighted by flames from the fire, which was in an adjoining room. Hastily throwing on a few clothes he rushed into the hotel corridor to arouse the inmates of the other rooms.

In ignorance of the extent of the fire, stopping to take nothing but two small hand bags from his room, he tried to render what assistance he could to clear the hotel of guests, who were dazed by the smoke. After going downstairs he went to the trunk room, where most of his luggage was stored, and endeavored to drag therefrom a box containing books and blanks, the property of the United States, as well as the pay rolls, final returns, and other papers appertaining to his last quarterly accounts as paymaster of the U. S. R. S. *Vermont*. This box was too heavy for him to handle alone; he could obtain no assistance, and was finally driven by the flames to relinquish his attempt to save the property.

The flames were so rapid in their advance that there appears to have been little time to look to the saving of anything but human life. We learn that several of the inmates of the house barely escaped with their lives. That the contents of the box above mentioned were entirely destroyed there can be no doubt, and we are of the opinion that Paymaster Tolfree should be held free from blame for their loss, both as to their being at the hotel and as to his failure to save them from the flames.

The following is a list of the public property destroyed, so far as can be ascertained from Paymaster Tolfree:

One book containing fifty sets blank bills of exchange, with accompanying letters of advice, blanks, etc. Pay officers' pay rolls, books, blanks, etc. Book containing complete set of Navy Department circulars, book of instructions, pay tables, naval registers, etc. Rough pay rolls, final returns, etc., appertaining to accounts of receiving ship *Vermont* and U. S. S. *Dispatch*.

Paymaster Tolfree was accompanied by his clerk, Mr. Charles Blake, who had also reported for duty on board the *Trenton*, and who had under his charge a few books and pamphlets belonging to the United States, which were destroyed. The entire outfits of Paymaster Tolfree and Pay Clerk Blake, for three years, were stored at the hotel and were destroyed.

ASA WALKER,
Lieutenant, U. S. N.
WM. T. SWINBURNE,
Lieutenant, U. S. N.
THEO. B. M. MASON,
Lieutenant, U. S. N.

Rear-Admiral JOHN LEE DAVIS, U. S. N.,
Commanding U. S. Naval Force on Asiatic Station.

Approved.

JOHN LEE DAVIS, U. S. N.,
Commanding U. S. Naval Force on Asiatic Station.

NAVY DEPARTMENT,
Washington, June 4, 1886.

SIR: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your communication of the 2d instant, referring to bills which have been introduced in the Senate providing compensation to Paymaster James E. Tolfree and Pay Clerk Charles Blake, U. S. Navy, for the loss of their private property, and for relieving them of responsibility for the loss of Government property in their care, by the burning of the Windsor Hotel, at Yokohama, Japan, on the 8th of February last, and requesting to be informed if schedules of the property so lost have been received at this Department, and whether or not the officers mentioned will be held accountable for the Government property destroyed at that time.

In reply I have to state that the only information the Department has received as to the public or private property lost at the time referred to is contained in a letter from Paymaster Tolfree to Rear-Admiral J. L. Davis, commanding the Asiatic Station, reporting the destruction of the hotel above mentioned, and in the report of the board of officers ordered by Rear-Admiral Davis to investigate and report the facts in the case. Copies of the letter and report referred to, herewith transmitted, will afford the committee information as to the quantity and description of Government property lost by the burning of the hotel, and as to the fact that Paymaster Tolfree and Pay Clerk Blake sustained a loss of their entire outfit for a three-years' cruise. No schedules of the private property of these officers have been filed in the Department, and no estimate of its value can therefore be made.

As it appears from the report of the board referred to that Paymaster Tolfree and his clerk, being unable to obtain quarters on board the U. S. S. *Trenton*, to which they had been ordered, were stopping temporarily at the hotel in Yokohama, where they had stored the public property in their charge, consisting of books and blanks for use in the pay department of the ship; that all possible effort was made by them to save the property in question, and that no blame was attributed to them for the loss of the same, the Department will not, under the circumstances, hold these officers accountable for the money value of the Government property which is reported by the board to have been unavoidably destroyed.

Very respectfully,

W. C. WHITNEY,
Secretary of the Navy.

Hon. J. D. CAMERON,
Chairman Committee on Naval Affairs, United States Senate.

Uniforms of naval officers required by the regulations of the Department.

Special full-dress coat	\$65.00
Full-dress coat	60.00
Frock coat	55.00
Service coat	38.00
Overcoat	50.00
Full-dress trousers	25.00
Full-dress vest	8.00
Undress trousers	15.00
Undress vests	8.00
Service trousers	12.00
Service vest	8.00
White blouses	20.00
Six white vests	30.00
Six white trousers	42.00
Twelve white shirts	24.00
Six undershirts	12.00
Six pairs drawers	12.00
Rubber suit	16.00
Epaulets	50.00
Chapeau	20.00
Full-dress belt	12.00
Undress belt	5.00
Swords	15.00
Gloves (per dozen)	4.00
Tin case for chapeau	3.50
Straps	6.00
Helmet	5.00
Cap	7.50
Epaulet embroidery	5.00

Collar ornaments	\$5.00
Laces, starkey (one-half inch).....	5.25
Boots, shoes, and stockings	30.00
Blankets, sheets, spreads, pillow-cases, etc.....	20.00
Provisions and mess gear (to each officer).....	40.00
Total.....	733.25

The officers must also be supplied with citizens, dress, including hats, boots, underwear, etc.; also the officers have professional and other books, trunks, watches, etc.; indeed the ship is their home. The wreck of the *Tallapoosa* occurred at 11 o'clock at night, after most of the officers and men had turned in. She sunk in less than fifteen minutes after being struck, and hardly anything on board was saved. It was all the men could do to save their lives; as it was, three were drowned.

The uniforms of officers of the Navy, of different ranks, are designated in the difference in the width of the gold lace, the number of stripes, and ornaments.

